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Selected Speeches and News Releases

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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

USDA HELPS FIND THE BEST PROTEIN BUYS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9—Turkey, ground beef, whole chicken, ground chuck, and pork shoulder were found to be the best meat buys in a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture study.

A cut's economy depends on the amount of cooked lean meat or the number of servings it provides, as well as price per pound, according to James T. Heimbach, Ph.D., acting administrator of the Human Nutrition Information Service. "Relatively high-priced meat cuts with little or no waste may be more economical than low-priced cuts with a great deal of bone, gristle or fat," he said.

Costs in this study, which included meat alternates such as peanut butter and eggs as well as selected types and cuts of meat, poultry and fish, were estimated using nationwide prices collected in December 1988 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor.

The study also compared costs of 20 grams of protein—about one-third of the recommended allowance for a man—from selected meats and alternates. Some meat alternates may be better buys than less expensive cuts of meat. However, some processed meat products, such as frankfurters and bologna, were found to cost more as sources of protein than some beef roasts and steaks.

Heimbach said that while a 3-ounce serving of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish provides 20 or more grams of protein, the amount of some alternates and meat products required to provide 20 grams of protein is well over the amount people normally eat in a day. For example, it takes 5 tablespoons of peanut butter, four frankfurters, or 10 slices of bacon to provide 20 grams of protein.

Heimbach said consumers can use these tables to obtain comparable costs for meats and alternates in their supermarkets by multiplying the part of the market unit figure by the local price per unit.

Estimated Cost of Meats and Alternates

Cost of 3 ounces of cooked lean from specified meat and poultry using nationwide prices collected in December 1988:

Food	Retail price per pound*	Part of pound for 3 ounces of cooked lean	Cost of 3 ounces of cooked lean
Turkey, ready-to-cook	$0.97	0.41	$0.40
Ground beef, regular	1.40	.29	.41
Chicken, whole, ready-to-cook	.88	.55	.48
Ground chuck	1.79	.28	.50
Pork shoulder, smoked, bone in	1.10	.46	.51
Ham, canned	2.60	.25	.65
Chuck roast of beef, bone in	1.80	.44	.79
Round roast of beef, bone out	2.68	.30	.80
Chicken breasts, bone in	2.06	.40	.82
Round beefsteak, bone out	3.01	.32	.96
Pork chops, center cut, bone in	2.65	.42	1.11
Sirloin beefsteak, bone in	3.23	.38	1.23
Rib roast of beef, bone in	4.03	.43	1.73
T-bone beefsteak, bone in	4.97	.41	2.04

Cost of 20 grams of protein from specified meats and meat alternates at December 1988 prices:

Food	Market unit	Price per market unit*	Part of market unit to give 20 grams of protein**	Cost of 20 grams of protein
Eggs, large	doz.	$0.83	0.28	$0.23
Turkey, ready-to-cook	lb.	.97	.33	.32
Peanut butter	18 oz.	2.04	.16	.33
Bread, white, enriched***	lb.	.66	.50	.33
Pork shoulder, smoked, bone in	lb.	1.10	.32	.35
Tuna, canned	6.5 oz.	.89	.41	.36
Chicken, whole, ready-to-cook	lb.	.88	.42	.37
Milk, whole, fluid****	1/2 gal.	1.21	.31	.38

Table continued on next page

Ground beef, regular.....	lb.	1.40	.27	.38
Ground chuck	lb.	1.79	.25	.45
Chuck roast of beef, bone in ..	lb.	1.80	.29	.52
Chicken breasts, bone in.....	lb.	2.06	.27	.56
American process cheese	lb.	2.86	.20	.57
Cheddar cheese, natural	lb.	3.21	.18	.58
Round roast of beef, bone out .	lb.	2.68	.23	.62
Round beefsteak, bone out	lb.	3.01	.22	.66
Ham, canned	lb.	2.60	.26	.68
Frankfurters, all meat	lb.	2.04	.39	.80
Sirloin beefsteak, bone in	lb.	3.23	.26	.84
Pork chops, center cut, bone in	lb.	2.65	.32	.85
Bologna	lb.	2.24	.38	.85
Pork sausage, bulk	lb.	1.92	.47	.90
Bacon, sliced	lb.	1.79	.52	.93
Rib roast of beef, bone in	lb.	4.03	.32	1.29
T-bone beefsteak, bone in	lb.	4.97	.30	1.49

* U.S. average retail price of food item estimated using information provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

** About one-third of the daily amount recommended for a 20-year-old man. Assumes that all meat is eaten.

*** Bread and other grain products, such as pasta and rice, frequently are used with a small amount of meat, poultry, fish, or cheese as main dishes in economy meals. In this way, the high-quality protein in meat and cheese enhances the lower quality of protein in cereal products.

**** Although milk is not used to replace meat in meals, it is an economical source of good-quality protein.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard W. Goldberg today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Feb. 10, through midnight Thursday, Feb. 16.

Since the AWP is less than the 1987-crop and 1988-crop base quality loan rates of 52.25 and 51.80 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate for 1987-crop and 1988-crop upland cotton during this period is equal to the AWP adjusted for the specific quality and location.

Because the loan repayment rate for 1988-crop upland cotton in effect during this period is less than the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments will be made to eligible producers who agree to forgo loan eligibility on their 1988-crop upland cotton. The loan deficiency payment rate for cotton that the producer agrees not to pledge as loan collateral during this period will equal the difference between the loan rate and the loan repayment rate in effect for that period.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Based on data for the week ending Feb. 9, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price		
Northern Europe Price	63.47	
Adjustments:		
Average U.S. spot market location	12.00	
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.00	
Average U.S. location	0.42	
Sum of Adjustments	-14.42	
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	49.05	cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment		
Northern Europe Price	63.47	
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	-58.17	
	5.30	
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	-4.15	
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	1.15	cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Feb. 16.

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USDA ANNOUNCES SOYBEAN/SUNFLOWER PLANTINGS ALLOWED ON PERMITTED ACREAGE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced that producers will be allowed to plant 80 percent of the soybeans they requested authorization to plant in lieu of their permitted acreage under 1989 wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice programs.

The percentage was established to avoid the 1989 crop soybean price falling below $5.49 per bushel.

Sunflower producers will be allowed to plant all of their submitted request for authorization to plant sunflowers in lieu of program crops.

On Nov. 3, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that the special provision allowing the planting of soybeans and sunflowers on permitted acreage would be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, to ensure the price for soybeans would not be less than $5.49 per bushel. After reviewing world supply and demand, price conditions, crop rotation practices, and other expected soybean and sunflower plantings, it was determined that unless the requested plantings were reduced by the amounts announced today, the average 1989 crop soybean market price would likely fall below $5.49 per bushel.

To protect their program crop acreage base history, producers will be given planting credit for the amount of soybeans or sunflowers they plant in lieu of the program crop.

During the Dec. 19 through Feb. 3 signup period for the special soybean/sunflower planting provision, producers requested authorization to plant 3.5 million acres of soybeans and 353 thousand acres of sunflowers.

State-by-state acreage enrollment figures for the two commodities are:

State	Soybean Acreage	Sunflower Acreage	Total
Alabama	8,561.8	0.0	8,561.8
Alaska	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arizona	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arkansas	59,674.1	44.7	59,718.8
California	0.0	1,961.7	1,961.7
Colorado	1,501.2	2,601.1	4,102.3
Connecticut	0.0	0.0	0.0
Delaware	5,178.3	0.0	5,178.3
Florida	2,724.6	0.0	2,724.6

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Georgia	32,726.8	130.7	32,857.5
Idaho	0.0	0.0	0.0
Illinois	471,566.1	142.4	471,708.5
Indiana	233,655.2	0.0	233,655.2
Iowa	501,787.0	0.0	501,787.0
Kansas	235,891.2	13,486.3	249,377.5
Kentucky	51,478.7	0.0	51,478.7
Louisiana	27,486.9	0.0	27,486.9
Maine	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maryland	26,461.1	0.0	26,461.1
Massachusetts	0.0	0.0	0.0
Michigan	99,537.3	371.9	99,909.2
Minnesota	395,825.6	13,054.3	408,879.9
Mississippi	46,679.5	0.0	46,679.5
Missouri	162,657.5	0.0	162,657.5
Montana	0.0	3,160.7	3,160.7
Nebraska	364,315.5	2,971.8	367,287.3
Nevada	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Hampshire	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Jersey	5,870.5	0.0	5,870.5
New Mexico	779.1	412.2	1,191.3
New York	9,472.3	24.8	9,497.1
North Carolina	33,912.8	14.4	33,927.2
North Dakota	151,745.6	259,198.1	410,943.7
Ohio	188,336.9	101.9	188,438.8
Oklahoma	7,557.2	1,242.2	8,799.4
Oregon	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pennsylvania	15,177.9	62.9	15,240.8
Rhode Island	0.0	0.0	0.0
South Carolina	19,003.5	22.9	19,026.4
South Dakota	235,372.9	50,386.2	285,759.1
Tennessee	27,062.2	0.0	27,062.2
Texas	25,734.4	3,665.0	29,399.4
Utah	811.7	0.0	811.7
Vermont	0.0	0.0	0.0
Virginia	31,327.8	4.0	31,331.8
Washington	26.2	0.0	26.2
West Virginia	2,520.2	0.0	2,520.2
Wisconsin	66,415.0	72.7	66,487.7
Wyoming	0.0	132.2	132.2
TOTAL	3,548,834.6	353,265.1	3,902,099.7

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USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON 1989-CROP HONEY PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14—Milton Hertz, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation, today invited public comment on the price-support program for the 1989 honey crop.

The price-support loan level for the 1989 honey crop will be 56.36 cents per pound, determined by the formula in section 201(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949. Hertz requested comments on adjustments that may be made to the loan rate. Adjustments can reflect floral source, color, class, grade, location and other market differentials under which the honey is marketed.

Hertz also requested comments on the adoption of a program provision which would permit producers to repay their loans at a level that is the lesser of the loan level established for the 1989 crop or at level set by the secretary of agriculture.

Send written comments by Mar. 15 to: Director, Commodity Analysis Division, USDA-ASCS, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013. Comments will be made available for public inspection during business hours in room 3741-S of USDA's South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard W. Goldberg today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

—long grain whole kernels, 9.97 cents per pound;

—medium grain whole kernels, 9.29 cents per pound;

—short grain whole kernels, 9.23 cents per pound;

—broken kernels, 4.98 cents per pound.

Minimum loan repayment rates for 1987 crop loans are the higher of the world price or 50 percent of the loan rate. For1988 crop rice, the minimum repayment rates are the higher of the world price or 60 percent of the loan rate.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

—long grain, $6.16 per hundredweight;

—medium grain, $5.82 per hundredweight;

—short grain, $5.55 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3:00 P.M. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Feb. 21 at 3:00 P.M. EST, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-5954

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EROSION-CONSCIOUS FARMERS CAN OUTFLANK WHEAT APHID'S THREAT TO GRASSES

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14—Farmers signing up for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program may be able to outmaneuver Russian wheat aphids—new wheat and barley pests that also go after some grasses used to stop erosion. "We've put together a list of of 25 grasses used in the CRP that are least likely to play host to and be damaged by Russian wheat aphids," says entomologist S. Dean Kindler of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "The list came from preliminary greenhouse research with 124 grasses and other plants."

Farmers who join the CRP, which now holds 28 million acres, convert primarily erodible cropland to soil-holding grass, trees or other plants for 10 years. Farmers may submit bids to enter the CRP at their county USDA Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Office. The current signup period extends through Feb. 24. "Choosing grasses less favored as hosts should reduce the likelihood of CRP plantings being damaged by the aphids," says Kindler at the ARS Plant Science Research Laboratory, Stillwater, Okla.

He says the aphid has spread to 15 states and southern Canada since it was first spotted in Texas in 1986. Difficult to control, it cost U.S. farmer an estimated $53 million in 1987—probably more in 1988. "New CRP plantings of susceptible grasses are not likely to increase the aphid problem where it already exists," Kindler says.

USDA's Soil Conservation Service provides technical help to farmers joining the CRP. Marc Safley of the service's Ecological Science Division says field personnel are being advised on how and where to

apply the research findings. "CRP plants are selected on a local, case-by-case basis. This includes an evaluation of an area's existing host plants, proximity of CRP plantings to wheat and availability and adaptability of non-host plants," Safley says. "The research indicates, there may be no satisfactory alternative grasses for the CRP in some low-precipitation areas such as the Intermountain West or some parts of the Northern Great Plains."

Kindler agrees and cautions against misconstruing or overextending the findings. "Although we found that many grasses used in the CRP make good aphid hosts, we have not proven any correlation between CRP plantings and wheat aphid populations on cereal crops," he says.

Chemical control of the pest is expensive and has had only moderate success, says Robert L. Burton, Stillwater research leader. "As the aphid feeds on a wheat or barley leaf, the leaf curls around it like a tortilla, protecting it from chemicals, beneficial insects and environmental stress," he says.

Kindler says the 16 warm-season grasses on the list include bluestems, sideoats grama and switchgrass. The nine cool-season grasses include orchardgrass, tall fescue and western wheatgrass. Warm-season grasses grow during the hot summer, with summer rains; cool-season grasses grow in the cool spring or late fall.

As for other plants Kindler tested, none of 27 legumes or 17 native forbs hosted the insect.

In a series of greenhouse tests, Kindler caged 10 of the aphids with each tested species. Two weeks later he checked the cages for surviving aphids or their offspring.

The findings are among the first fruits of the research agency's efforts to control the pest, including a search for plants with genetic resistance. New test results on grasses are expected this spring.

In other aphid research at Stillwater, scientists have found resistance to the aphid pest in breeding lines of triticale and other wheat-related species. The scientists are trying to incorporate the resistance into bread wheats—a process that takes several years. They are also importing, rearing and evaluating parasites as biological controls for the aphid.

Five other ARS laboratories in the U.S. and the ARS European Parasite Laboratory in Rome are working to learn more about the aphid and to find and test potential controls. "But there's no quick fix," Kindler says. "This pest is going to be around for a long time, and it's likely to be serious at least in the next few years."

Grasses in the CRP That Were Tested and Found to be Poor Hosts or Non-Hosts for the Russian Wheat Aphid

The grasses in each column are listed in order of average lowest (or zero) to highest numbers of live aphids on each plant after replicated 2-week greenhouse screening studies.

Cool Season

reed canarygrass
Kentucky bluegrass
orchardgrass
tall fescue
alkali bluegrass
basin wildrye
plains bluegrass
perennial ryegrass
western wheatgrass

Warm Season

little bluestem
bahia grass
Klein grass
weeping lovegrass
yellow bluestem
big bluestem
switchgrass
Atherstone lovegrass
Wilman lovegrass
bermuda grass
indian grass
alkali sacaton
sand lovegrass
buffalo grass
black grama
sideoats grama

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USDA REOPENS COMMENT PERIOD FOR PROPOSED CATTLE INSPECTION SYSTEM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will reopen the comment period for a proposed new cattle inspection system, allowing comments to be accepted until May 15. The initial comment period closed Jan. 30. "The streamlined inspection system for cattle would play a major role in the future of federal inspection, so it is crucial that industry and the public have adequate opportunity to comment," said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food

Safety and Inspection Service. "In response to requests for additional time to submit information on the proposed system, we are reopening the comment period for 90 days," Crawford said.

The proposed system, which modifies inspection procedures, makes plants responsible for removing dressing defects, such as dirt, hair, and hide remnants. Inspectors would monitor compliance with this process through statistical sampling of the finished products. The proposed system is aimed at increasing inspection efficiency and allowing inspectors to concentrate on detecting disease conditions.

Comments should be submitted to: Policy Office, Attn. Linda Carey, Hearing Clerk, Room 3175-South, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

FSIS inspects meat and poultry to ensure that they are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

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SUPPORT LEVELS, EXPORT EDIBLE SALES POLICY FOR 1989 CROP PEANUTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that the national average support level for 1989 crop quota peanuts will be $615.87 per short ton, compared with $615.27 for the 1988 crop.

The following provisions were also announced:

—The national average support level for additional peanuts will be $149.75 per short ton, unchanged from the 1988 crop.

—1989 crop additional peanuts owned or controlled by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation will be sold for export edible use at no less than $400.00 per ton, unchanged from the 1988 crop.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, requires that the national average support level for the 1989 crop of quota peanuts reflect any increase in the national average cost of peanut production for the preceding year, excluding any change in the cost of land. This law also provides that the quota support rate for the crop may not exceed the support rate for the preceding crop by more than six percent.

The national average support level for 1989 crop quota peanuts was increased from the 1988 level of $615.27 per short ton based on data

which indicated that the cost of producing 1988 crop peanuts was greater than the cost of producing 1987 crop peanuts.

The price support level for additional peanuts must be set at a level which ensures no loss to CCC from sales or disposal of the peanuts. In determining this level, USDA must consider the demand for peanut oil and peanut meal, the expected prices for other vegetable oils and protein meals and the demand for peanuts in foreign markets. The price support levels are subject to quality and other adjustments.

Also, in accordance with amendments made to the Act by section 1104(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987, loan outlays which would otherwise be incurred at the adjusted price support level for peanuts will be reduced by 1.4 percent.

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